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Murmansk fishing port. (Photo: Stock File)

## **Deals with West Africa intended to boost fishing in the region**



### **RUSSIAN FEDERATION**

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Russia intends to make a deal with West African countries to deliver trucks, boats and other equipment and train African students at no cost in exchange for the possibility catching more fish off the coasts of those countries.

The Federal Fisheries Agency, Rosrybolovstvo, has issued the report 'On Measures to Ensure the Presence of the Russian Fishing Fleet in the Zones of Foreign States' describing how Russian catches in EEZs within 200mi off the coast have been declining -- and competition is turning fiercer in West African countries.

Even though Russia has been fishing there since the 1970s, the early 21st century brought competition via trawlers from the European Union (EU) and China. Russian catches then fell from 211,000 tonnes in 2011 to 148,000 tonnes in the first nine months of this year, reports the Russian newspaper *Izvestia*.

"Today, the Murmansk trawler fleet and vessels from Kaliningard are operating there. But the African countries are imposing ever tougher terms for the issue of fishing quotas, raising prices and limiting fishing areas," Vladimir Grigoryev, chairman of the Northern Fishermen's Union, said.

The main species caught off West Africa are sardines, horse mackerel, sardinella and mackerel, and the Russian fleet targets them mainly off Morocco, Mauritania, Senegal and Namibia.

"Mauritania pushed back the fishing area more than 20mi offshore this year," said Valery Tsukanov, director of the [Murmansk Trawler Fleet](#). "We cannot fish there because there are no fish."

"They have raised the price of quotas many times over. The agreement with the Moroccans expired in June, and a new one has yet to be signed. They promise every day to sign a provisional memorandum — the text has been agreed," Tsukanov continued.

The Association of Russian Fishermen, which operates off West Africa, said that it would be optimal to double Russia's fishing quota to 400,000 tonnes, which would bring an additional USD 160 million.

The Federal Fisheries Agency wants the presence of the Russian fleet in the region to grow by making deals with African states and solving some of their problems, including

giving them Russian 4x4 trucks and office equipment, building three patrol boats for Senegal and Guinea-Bissau and accepting more West African students into Russian universities -- all for free.

The entity also proposed opening up 15 new spots in the current quota for foreign students and postgraduates focusing on fisheries at universities in Vladivostok, Murmansk, Astrakhan and Kaliningard.

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